

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 11365 182121Z

62

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

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AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE EC BRUSSELS 11365

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TAGS: ETRD, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH IMPORT MEASURES

REF: A) OECD PARIS 32867 (NOTAL) B) EC BRUSSELS 11287 (NOTAL);
C) GENEVA 9342 (NOTAL); D) EC BRUSSELS 11313 (NOTAL);
E) GENEVA 9353 (NOTAL); F) LONDON 19410; G) STATE 297301

1. SUMMARY: THE EC COMMISSION HAS NOT YET DECIDED HOW TO REACT TO THE BRITISH IMPORT MEASURES, BUT COMMISSION OFFICIALS GENERALLY SEEM RELIEVED THAT THE MEASURES WERE NOT WORSE, DISINCLINED TO GIVE THE BRITISH A HARD TIME, AND TENDING TOWARD ACCEPTANCE OF THE MEASURES. THE COMMISSION HAS NOT DECIDED ITS POSITION WITH REGARD TO GATT COUNCIL OR OECD CONSIDERATION OF THE MEASURES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE STAFF OF THE EC COMMISSION IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON A PAPER FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMISSION DECEMBER 22. HOWEVER, THERE IS A LARGE MEASURE OF CONSENSUS AMONG COMMISSION OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE'VE TALKED REGARDING THE BRITISH MEASURES AND THE ATTITUDE THE COMMUNITY SHOULD ADOPT TO THEM:

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A. THERE IS WDESPREAD RELIEF THAT THE MEASURES

WERE LIMITED IN SCOPE. THE IMAGE USED BY A COUPLE OF OFFICIALS IS THAT THE "MOUNTAIN PRODUCED A MOUSE." WHEN THIS MORNING THE BRITISH EXPLAINED THEIR ACTIONS TO MEMBER STATE AND COMMISSION OFFICIALS, THERE WAS LITTLE OR NO ADVERSE COMMENT AND THE SESSION WAS OVER IN TWENTY MINUTES.

B. THE COMMUNITY WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER TO ADOPT THE BRITISH TEXTILE RESTRICTIONS AS COMMUNITY ACTIONS. IF, AS SEEMS LIKELY, IT DOES SO, IT WILL SEEK TO JUSTIFY THEM UNDER THE SAFEGUARD CLAUSES OF THE EC-SPAIN AND EC-PORTUGAL AGREEMENT, AND CONSULT EX POST FACTO WITH THE SUPPLYING PARTNER. IN THE CASE OF SPAIN, A SIGNATORY TO THE MFA, THE UK ACTIONS MAY BE JUSTIFIED UNDER ARTICLE 3 OF THE MFA, AND, AGAIN, THERE WOULD APPEAR TO BE A NEED FOR CONSULTATIONS; SPANISH RECOURSE TO THE TSB IS ALSO NOT RULED OUT.

C. "SURVEILLANCE" OF TV TUBES AND SETS GIVES MORE OF A PROBLEM BECAUSE IT WILL APPLY TO INTRA--AS WELL AS EXTRA--EC TRADE. THE COMMISSION LINE SEEMS TO BE THAT "SURVEILLANCE" WILL NOT BE A BARRIER TO TRADE AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT GIVE RISE TO OBJECTIONS FROM OUTSIDE THE EC. AND WHILE SURVEILLANCE OF TV TUBES AND SETS MAY BE A "TECHNICAL INFRACTION" OF THE RULES REGARDING TRADE WITHIN THE EC, SOME OFFICIALS NOTE THAT IT, UNLIKE THE TEXTILE QUOTAS, HAS NOT BEEN PUT INTO IMMEDIATE EFFECT; AND SUGGEST THAT IT TOO MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE GIVEN COMMUNITY BLESSING.

3. THE COMMISSION POSITION ON EVENTUAL GATT COUNCIL OR OECD CONSIDERATION OF THE BRITISH MEASURES IS NOT YET SETTLED. LUYTEN, THE COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA, HAS ONLY BEEN TOLD THAT "FOR THE MOMENT" THE COMMISSION DOES NOT CONSIDER THE NATURE OF THE BRITISH MEASURES REQUIRES "IMMEDIATE" GATT COUNCIL CONSIDERATION. GREENWALD

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